



PASSPORT to Health

Keeping Providers Informed

Volume 1, Issue 4, FALL 2004

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Key Contacts

PASSPORT To Health Provider Relations

For provider enrollment or disenrollment, change of ownership or address, increasing/decreasing client caseload, and claims questions:

(800) 624-3958 In State
(406) 442-1837
(406) 442-4402 Fax

Mail documentation to:
Provider Relations
PO Box 4936
Helena, MT 59604

PASSPORT To Health Client Services

For enrolling or disenrolling clients or questions about the monthly caseload report or client services:

(800) 362-8312 Phone
(406) 442-2328 Fax

Mail documentation to:
PASSPORT Program
PO Box 254
Helena, MT 59624

Provider Information Website:
<http://www.mtmedicaid.org>

Protect Your Patients: Get Vaccinated Against Influenza

Leanne Smith,
*Statewide Physician Office Project
Coordinator, Mountain-Pacific
Quality Health Foundation*

Did you get vaccinated against influenza last fall? Did your staff and coworkers?

If you answered “no” to either question, you may have put your most vulnerable patients’ health at risk.

Health care workers encounter high-risk patients throughout the influenza season, yet only about one in three pro-

fects patients by getting immunized. That means two out of three health care workers potentially contribute to the spread of a vaccine-preventable disease that kills 36,000 persons each year in the United States and hospitalizes more than 114,000. Whether they work in medical practices, hospitals, long-term care facilities, home-care sites or other health settings, unvaccinated health care workers are a recognized cause of influenza outbreaks.

Many health care workers fail to recognize influenza as a serious disease that can be transmitted to high-risk patients. Further, many also ignore the

fact they belong to an occupational group for whom annual influenza vaccination is recommended. Some health care organizations do not provide on-site influenza vaccination for staff, or are only available at inconvenient times and locations. These are obstacles that can be easily overcome.

If you haven’t already established a vaccination program in your health care setting, start one. You can:

1. Commit to an annual employee vaccination program.

Among the benefits: better infection control, reduced employee

absenteeism, and better delivery of health care to the patients you serve.

2. Make the vaccination program convenient for all employees.

Take the vaccination services to the employees at their workstations (e.g., by means of a rolling cart). Offer vaccination services at convenient times, including nights and weekends. Administer vaccine under a standing orders protocol. A sample protocol is available from the Immunization Action Coalition at www.immunization.org/catg.d.p3074.pdf.

“Two out of three health care workers potentially contribute to the spread of a vaccine preventable disease that kills 36,000 persons each year in the United States and hospitalizes more than 114,000.”

3. Offer vaccines free of charge to all staff – full-time, part-time, and volunteers.

When the cost barrier is removed, more employees will comply. In addition, many employees will conclude that an employer who pays for vaccination is dedicated to employee and patient health and safety.

5. Develop campaigns to educate employees.

Use employee newsletters, e-mails, and bulletin boards to get the vaccine message out. Make the case for the influenza vaccine's safety and efficacy. Educate employees about their potential to infect patients. Emphasize that major medical organizations and other respected groups recommend annual vaccination of health care workers. Dispel any misinformation employees have that may be keeping them from getting vaccinated.

6. Educate health care workers to be advocates for influenza vaccination.

Motivate: The strongest motivator for a patient to be vaccinated is a recommendation from their health care provider.

Lead by example: A well-vaccinated health care staff demonstrates the importance of vaccination against influenza and attests to the staff's commitment to preserving the health of patients. Though the influenza vaccine is safe and effective, many of your patients aren't using it. Lead by example and be part of the solution!

This information was adapted from "Influenza Immunization Among Health Care Workers: A Call to Action," developed by representatives from 24 of the nation's leading professional health and labor organizations, under the direction of the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases.

Reading Well Program Boosts Immunization Rates in Montana

It has been nearly two years since the Reading Well program was implemented through a collaboration between PASSPORT and the Immunization Programs of DPHHS. Initially, the goal of the program was to increase the immunization rates of Montana's two-year olds by offering a free book to those children who were current on their shots.

In its first year, the Reading Well program helped increase Medicaid immunization rates for this age group by 6.4% percent. This early success inspired the Office of Public Instruction to join in to expand the program to reach Montana's kindergartners. This year, nearly 10,000 books were purchased for five- and six-year-olds who were fully immunized before entering kindergarten.

The process is easy: Parents or guardians of all two-year-olds and five-year-olds bring proof of their child's immunizations to their county or tribal health department. If the immunizations are not current, the county or tribal health department can give the needed shots or refer the client back to the PCP. If the immunizations are current, the child can choose a free book to take home. The Reading Well program is available to all Montanans, not just those receiving Medicaid.

Joyce Burgett, Immunizations Supervisor at DPHHS, said, "Another important benefit of the Reading Well program is that it encourages parents to get their children's immunization history into the registry. Now, these children can be tracked and reminded to return to their medical home for needed boosters." Burgett added that the registry also helps children easily locate their immunization records

when they go to athletic camps, college, or apply for certain jobs which require proof of immunization status.

The Reading Well program thanks PASSPORT providers who have promoted the benefits of health and literacy to their clients. To request Reading Well materials, or for more information, contact Anastasia Burton at DPHHS at aburton@state.mt.us or by calling (406) 444-9538.

In the Spotlight:



Montana Medicaid Names Physician Advisor for Nurse First Programs

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) and McKesson Health Solutions, a business unit of McKesson Corporation, recently announced that Janice Gomersall, M.D., has been named Physician Advisor for the Nurse First programs.

"Dr. Gomersall will work very closely with physicians and other health care providers throughout Montana to ensure that Nurse First will meet their needs, as well as those of their clients," said Mary Angela Collins, Medicaid Managed Care Bureau Chief at DPHHS. "Dr. Gomersall will also head an advisory board that will work

to make the Nurse First programs a success in our communities. We're excited to have a such a well-qualified, enthusiastic liaison for Nurse First on board," Collins added.

Nurse First began in January 2004 and includes disease management and nurse triage services for approximately 65,000 Medicaid beneficiaries throughout the state. Nurse First also includes Team Care, a utilization control and education program. Team Care clients have a history of using more services than necessary and require additional assistance when accessing health care.

"Nurse First is a terrific program, and I'm looking forward to letting other providers know about the ways the program can help improve the health of their Medicaid patients," Dr. Gomersall said.

McKesson administers the nurse triage line and the disease management programs of asthma, diabetes, heart failure, cancer and chronic pain. Participants in the disease management programs receive one-on-one counseling with a registered nurse about their chronic illness. The registered nurses work in McKesson's Care Centers, or are community-based nurses who travel to certain clients' homes to administer the programs.

Dr. Gomersall, who's lived in Montana for about eight years, will continue as a family practitioner specializing in obstetrics at the Lolo Family Practice in Lolo, where she's treated patients since 1996.

In addition to practicing medicine, Dr. Gomersall is extremely active in Montana's medical community, including positions as:

- ☐ Vice-Chair, Joint Investigational Review Board, St. Patrick Hospital and Community Medical Center, Missoula;

- ☐ Member, Quality Management Committee, Western Montana Clinic, Missoula;
- ☐ Member, C-Section Task Force, Community Medical Center OB Department, Missoula.

For more information about Nurse First, contact Tedd Weldon at the DPHHS Managed Care Bureau at (406) 444-1518 or email tweldon@state.mt.us

Drug PA Requests: Not Just for Providers

The Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) contracts with the Mountain-Pacific Quality Health Foundation in Helena to administer the Drug Prior Authorization (PA) Program. The Foundation employs pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to determine if a request for PA will be granted. Authorization is determined by criteria developed by the Drug Utilization Review Board for Medicaid and the Mental Health Services Program (MHSP).

Requests for prior authorization of drugs can be made by phone, fax, or mail, and may be submitted to the PA Unit by the provider, the provider's nurse or designated agent, or the pharmacy. Each request must contain the recipient's name, Medicaid ID number (usually his/her Social Security number), the name of the medication requested with dosage form and strength, usage directions, the reason for requesting PA with supporting information as necessary, and the name of the requestor and contact phone number.

PA request forms for faxing are available from the PA Unit, and are also contained in the Medicaid Pharmacy Provider Manual. Or, visit mtmedicaid.org and download the form.

To contact the Drug Prior Authorization Unit:

(406) 443-6002 for Helena calls
(800) 395-7961 for toll free calls

(406) 443-7014 for Helena FAX
(800) 294-1350 for toll-free FAX

For questions regarding Montana Medicaid's pharmacy program, contact Dan Peterson at (406) 444-2738 or danpeterson@state.mt.us.

Denied PASSPORT Claims Can Be Easily Prevented

There's no denying it – billing Medicaid claims can be challenging at times. Claims can deny for many reasons, including: timely filing; missing or incorrect information; third party liability; invalid type of service for provider type; and claim duplication. While these are fairly common reasons for denials, one of the most frequent causes is a lack of or inaccurate PASSPORT referral information.

PASSPORT denials affect both PASSPORT providers and non-PASSPORT providers. Help us ensure your claims are paid by remembering the following:

- ☐ Check client eligibility at the time of service.
- ☐ Verify that the client is on your enrollee list. If the client isn't yours, verify you have correct authorization for services.
- ☐ Bill with the correct recipient ID.
- ☐ Bill with the correct Medicaid ID number in box 33 on the CMS 1500 claim.
- ☐ If you are billing for one of your own PASSPORT clients, you may either leave box 17a, "I.D. number of the referring physician" on the CMS 1500 claims blank or fill it in.

- ❑ Check that the referral number you are giving out is correct for the date of service.

If you've followed these tips, but your claims are still denying, call Provider Relations at 1-800-624-3958 to verify that your PASSPORT number is linked to your Medicaid number. If you've recently enrolled as a new (or new to a group) PASSPORT provider, your PASSPORT number may not be linked to your Medicaid ID.

A change in practice ownership also means a change in your tax identification number. Because PASSPORT numbers are non-transferable, a new Medicaid and PASSPORT number must be assigned whenever a change in practice ownership occurs.

For assistance on these and other reimbursement issues, contact Provider Relations.

If you keep these tips in mind when billing for your PASSPORT clients, claims should move through our system smoothly and result in timely payment.

Important PASSPORT Reminders

❑ Team Care/PASSPORT providers the same

A Team Care provider is also the client's PASSPORT provider – they are one and the same. As such, in order to receive reimbursement for services, all PASSPORT rules are to be followed by providers when treating Team Care clients.

❑ Referrals for clients you've never seen

You **can** choose to approve a referral if the services are medically necessary and appropriate, even if you have never seen the client. You might encourage the client to establish a patient-provider relationship with you for future services. If you get numerous referral requests for a client who fails to come to your clinic, it may be appropriate to remove the client from your caseload so s/he can choose a provider who better meets her/his needs.

❑ PASSPORT Referral Tips

Be sure to check your PASSPORT number each month and give the correct number for the correct date of service when approving PASSPORT services. Referrals may be verbal or written, but must be documented.

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